

Media, PA— This Saturday, Congressman Sestak joined leaders of higher education institutions and the local workforce community at the Williamson Free School of Mechanical Trades in Media to discuss workforce development in our region, particularly in the artisan trades. The second meeting of the Congressman's Higher Education and Workforce Development Advisory Committee (members listed below) followed June's Workforce Development Summit, which was attended by business owners, educators, parents, and students. — "I formed this committee with the interest of both our local students and our small business owners in mind," said the Congressman. "By facilitating a working relationship between educators and business owners, I hope that I can better focus my efforts to provide students with the opportunity to develop the appropriate skills for the modern job market and simultaneously bolster the local economy."

At the meeting, the Congressman reviewed the themes of his summit, which was composed of three panels, focusing on the needs of local businesses, programs available at local technical and vocational schools and the process of matching recent graduates to local businesses. The committee then talked about potential ways to address concerns voiced at the summit, including how to better prepare students to meet the needs of local businesses and ways to address the lack of participation in training programs for artisan skills. Building on one of the main topics of his Summit, the Congressman used the meeting to discuss methods of partnering local high schools with area businesses and introducing students to careers in high-value manufacturing fields, which are struggling to find qualified employees.

The Workforce Development Summit was designed to bring together the administrators of vocational and technical schools, as well as those schools that have vo-tech curriculum, and team them up with businesses in our region for a two-fold purpose. The first was to stress the value of teaching our student the right skills that businesses are in need of and are actively seeking out. Second was to encourage businesses to have a mentoring roll in the lives of students who will one day make up our workforce.

Congressman Sestak is a member of the House Committee on Education and Labor, and has incorporated education into his five pillars of national security, along with health security, economic security, defense security and energy/environmental security. Since taking office in January 2007, the Congressman has visited area colleges and technical institutions, hosted summits on higher education and advanced training, such as the workforce event and a College Cost Affordability Summit, and worked hard to pass legislation that increases access to educational opportunities. Recently, the Congressman supported the College Opportunity and Affordability Act, which was signed into law in February, and would help students and families plan financially for education by requiring that colleges provide information about the anticipated

cost of a post-secondary degree. In addition, the act increases aid available through Pell Grants and includes an amendment introduced by the Congressman to make transferring easier.

“With our country’s economy struggling, it is becoming more and more imperative that students obtain a post-secondary education to be competitive in the workforce, whether it is at a four-year college, a two-year institution or a trade school,” said Congressman Sestak. “It is the government’s responsibility to help students afford the ever-increasing cost of a college education to help ensure their job security and our nation’s financial security.”

The following individuals serve or act as advisors to the 7th Congressional District Higher Education and Workforce Development Advisory Committee

Seth Schram: Principal, Chester County Technical College High School

James R Hall: Parent

Sharon L. Cannon: Executive Director, Economic and Workforce Development Program, Cheyney University

Dr. Jerry Parker: President, Delaware County Community College (DCCC)

Rev. Peter M. Donohue: President, Villanova University

Dr. Paul A. Reid: President, The Williamson Free School

Deborah Erie: Director of Student and Enrollment Services, Penn State University, Brandywine Campus

Dr. Diane M. Disney: Chancellor, Professor of Management, Penn State University, Great Valley

Suzanne V. Holloman, MBA: Dean, Workforce Development and Continuing Education Montgomery County Community College

Raymond L. Toole: Director of Financial Aid, Delaware County Community College (DCCC)

Jack Holefelder: Director, The Foundation of the Delaware County Chamber, Delaware County Chamber of Commerce

Constance T. McEvoy: Director of College Counseling, Agnes Irwin School

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.*